WORKING WELL WITH TEENS

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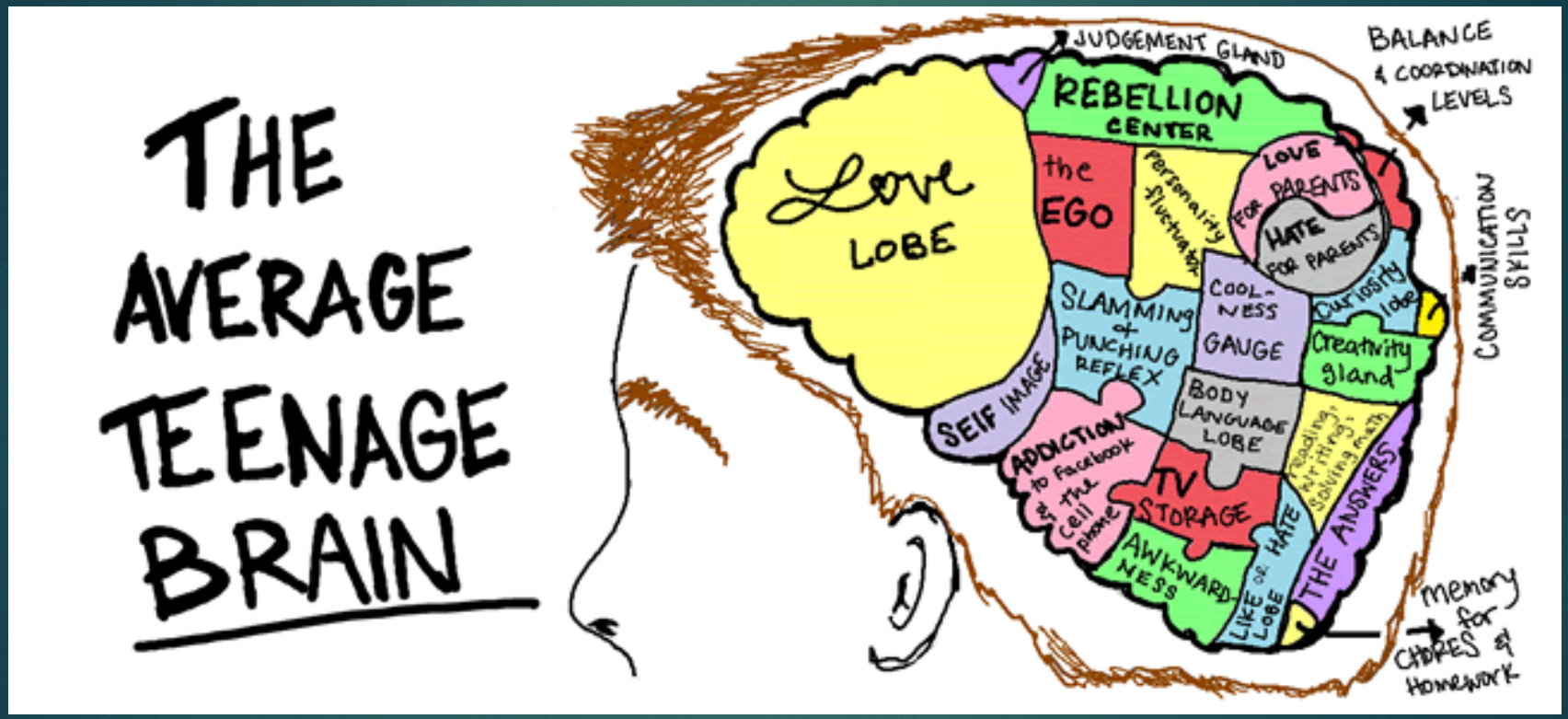
Teens……


THE AVERAGE TEENAGE BRAIN
JUDGEMENT GLAND
BALANCE & COORDINATION LEVELS
REBELLION CENTER
Love LOBE
the EGO
Personality fluctuator
LOVE FOR PARENTS
HATE FOR PARENTS
COMMUNICATION SKILLS
SLAMMING & PUNCHING REFLEX
COOL-NESS GAUGE
Curiosity lobe
Creativity gland
SEIF IMAGE
BODY LANGUAGE LOBE
ADDICTION to Facebook & the cell phone
TV STORAGE
reading, writing, solving math
THE ANSWERS
AWKWARD-NESS
LIKE OR HATE LOBE
memory for CHORES & HOMEWORK

Physical Characteristics of Teens

Ages 12-14

- Rapid changes in physical appearance
- Hands, feet, noses, and ears may grow faster than arms and legs
- Wide range of development between genders

Ages 15 - 18

- Concerned about body image
- Range of size and maturity narrowing

Emotional development of Teens.

Ages 12-14

- Compare themselves to others
- Concerned about physical development and emerging sexuality
- See themselves as “on-stage”
- Concerned about peer acceptance
- Want privacy and independence from adults
- Want to be part of something important

Ages 15-18

- Want to be seen as individual while conforming to certain peer standards
- Want autonomy
- Want to determine what happens in their world

Intellectual Characteristics of Teens

Ages 12-14

- Concerned with justice and equality
- Think abstractly; enjoy “what-if” thinking
- Understand cause and effect
- Can handle in-depth, long-term projects
- Challenge assumptions
- Want to explore beyond community

Ages 15-18

- Mastering abstract thinking
- Like demonstrating acquired knowledge
- Develop theories to explain and make sense of things
- Create new possibilities from information
- Can consider issues from many perspectives
- Grow impatient with meaningless activity

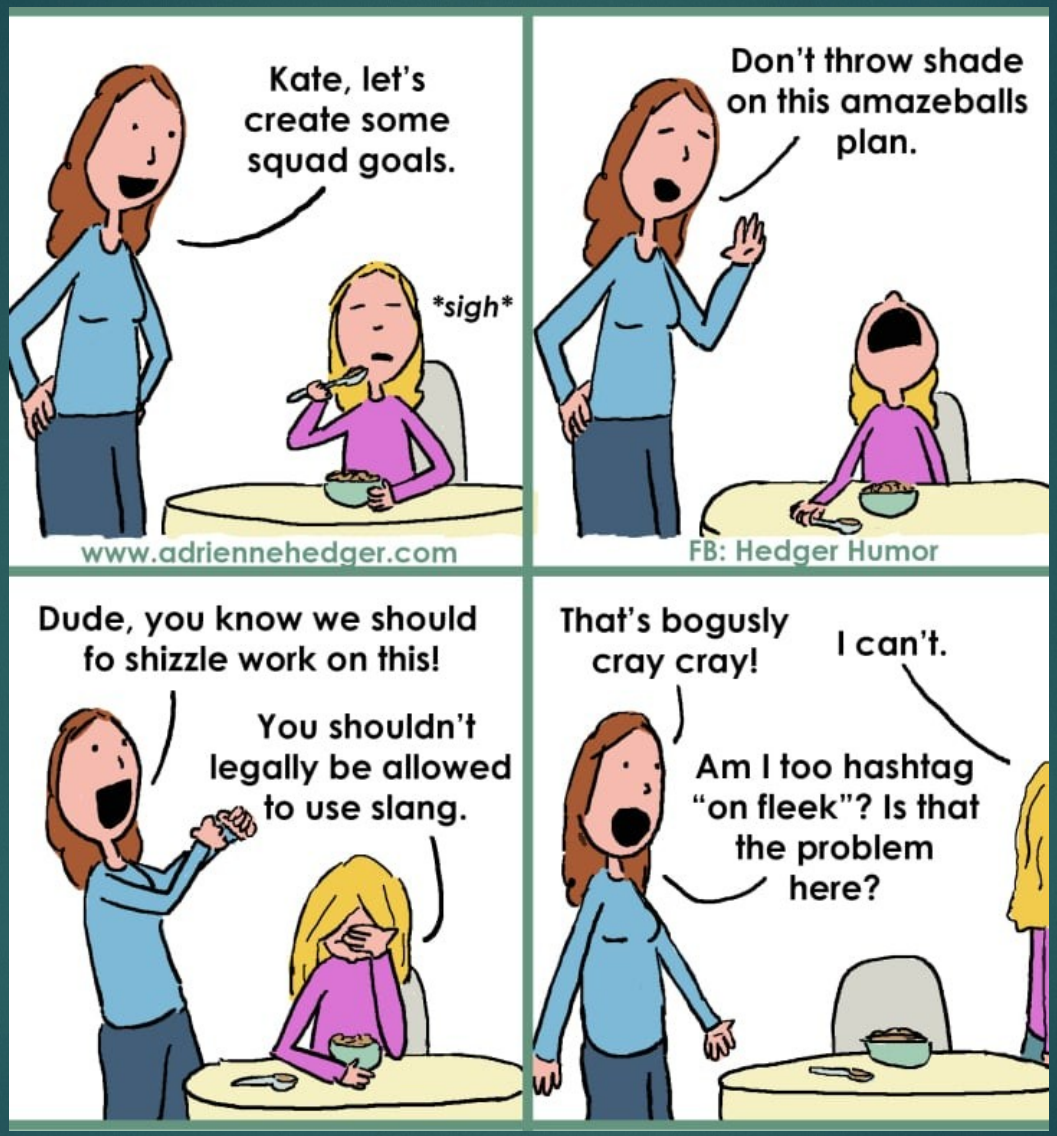
Social Characteristics of Teens

Ages 12-14

- Look more to peers than adults for approval
- Interested in opposite sex
- Look for role models and start fan clubs
- Question authority and family values

Ages 15-18

- Want intimacy
- Want respect
- Re-negotiate relationships
- Test sexual attractiveness
- Want adult-like leadership roles
- Able to commit and follow through


Kate, let's create some squad goals.
sigh
www.adriennehedger.com
Don't throw shade on this amazeballs plan.
FB: Hedger Humor
Dude, you know we should fo shizzle work on this!
You shouldn't legally be allowed to use slang.
That's bogusly cray cray!
I can't.
Am I too hashtag "on fleek"? Is that the problem here?

Why may you get disruptive behavior?

- Brain development
  - Their frontal lobe is not developed completely until **25**!
- Not enough sleep
- Having a bad day/week/life
- Need to define themselves (flirting/showing off)
- Need positive social interaction from peers and adults
- Need structure and clear limits so they are testing the rules and challenging authority.
- Mental health challenges

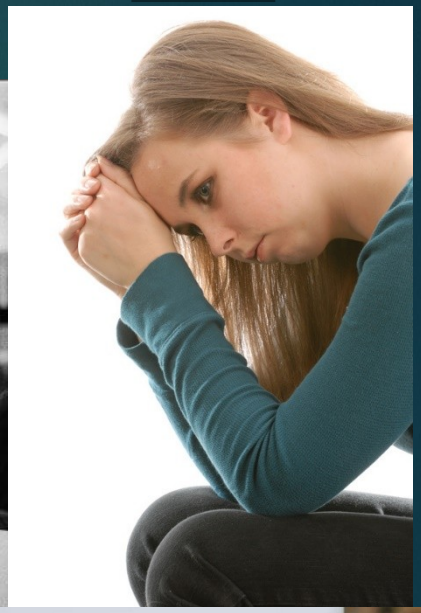
Heading off trouble……..

- Greet teens when you see them. Ask them about their day. This does many things –
  - They know that you see them and are aware that they are in the Library.
  - Begins a relationship. What teens need more than anything are people who care about them and are consistent.
  - Getting to know their names is a huge deterrent to unacceptable behavior. Think about your own children when they are in trouble….Paul Joseph!

TEEN ATTITUDE!

- Take a deep breath
- Introduce yourself
- Explain the library’s expectations of behavior
- Set clear and consistent boundaries
- Stay calm when dealing with disruptive behavior
- Ask if they understand
- Don’t take things personally

Facial expressions & Body language



Facial expressions – what messages do the following send?

Smiling –

Welcoming.

Frowning –

Not welcome or thoughtful.

Raised eyebrows –

Surprise or disbelief.

Pursed lips –

Disapproval.

Do you remember being a teen?

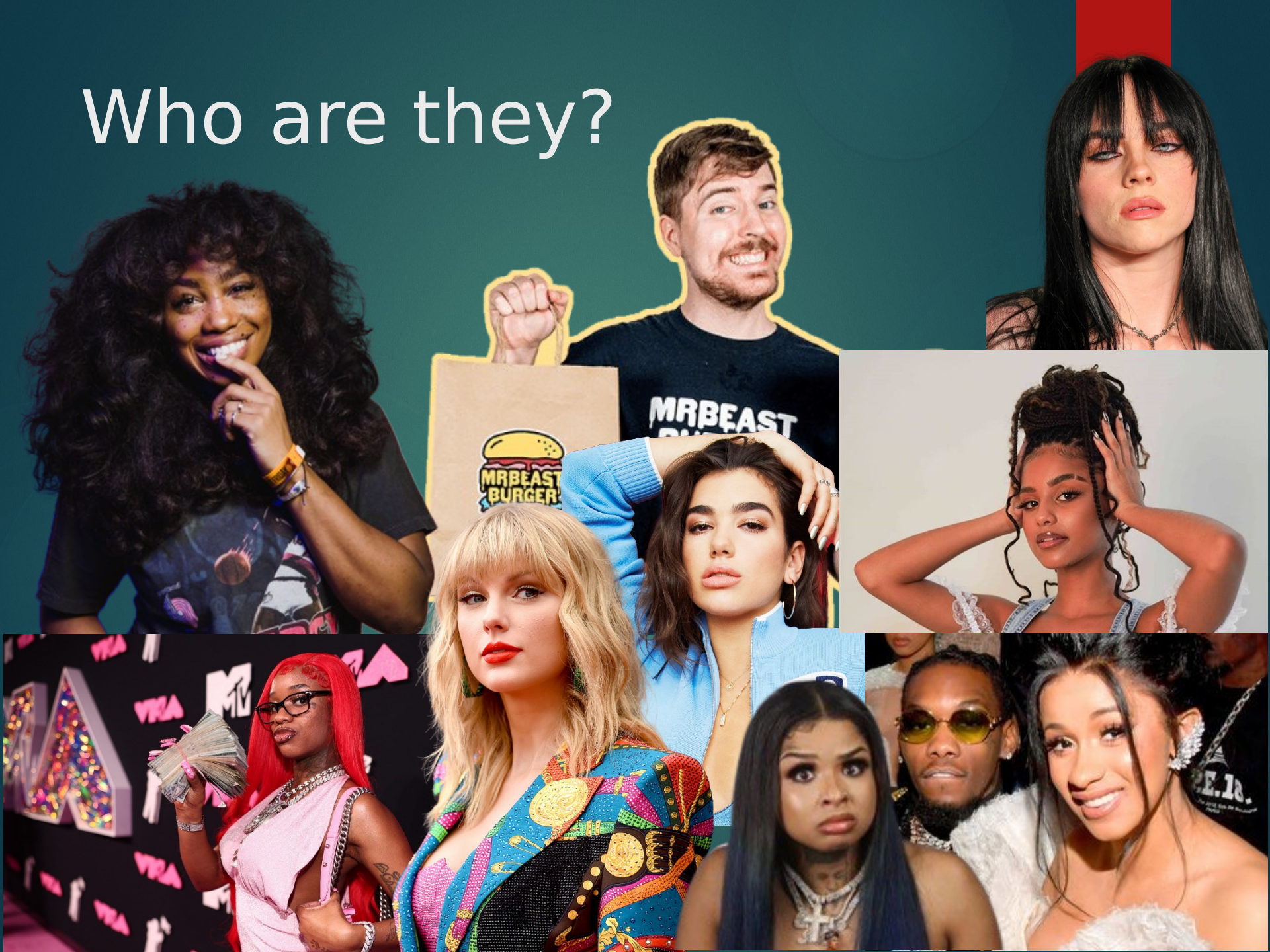
What was your favorite band?

What school subject did you hate??

Be willing to talk to teens about their interests and passions and reach beyond traditional library resources to support them. You don’t have to immerse yourself in pop culture but know some things.

What Game is this??

Who are they?



What are they watching?

Herd mentality!

When teens come in the library in a big group (which is sometimes how they feel safe) greet them. If you watch for a minute you will figure out who the leader is and befriend them or at least make sure you talk to them. They may be the key to calming down a situation should it occur.

Guidelines are important:

- All staff need to know the guidelines
- Remember everyone has different tolerance
- Sometimes circumstances can alter guidelines
- Always use your best judgement – there are times that rules need to be bent a little

Make sure they understand that they have choices:

- You can keep your hands to yourself or you can go home for the day – you choose.
- You can leave now and just be out a day or if you wait until security gets her it will be three days.

What are some other choices you can give them?

Sometimes they just have to GO!

Be willing to ask them to leave but be just as willing to follow that up with an invitation to try it again tomorrow…

..every time you have to ask them to leave make sure they know you are willing to try again.

Also very important……

- Absolutely do not hold a grudge! You are not helping them or yourself by keeping score of their infringements – I’m not saying ignore them just saying treat each day as a new one.
- Be firm – once you have asked them to leave don’t change your mind. They will respect your consistency.
- Don’t escalate, don’t engage, don’t argue. Stay calm. The less you say the better in the moment of turmoil.
- Don’t take it personal – it’s not! Doesn’t matter what they call you. The only real power they have are words!

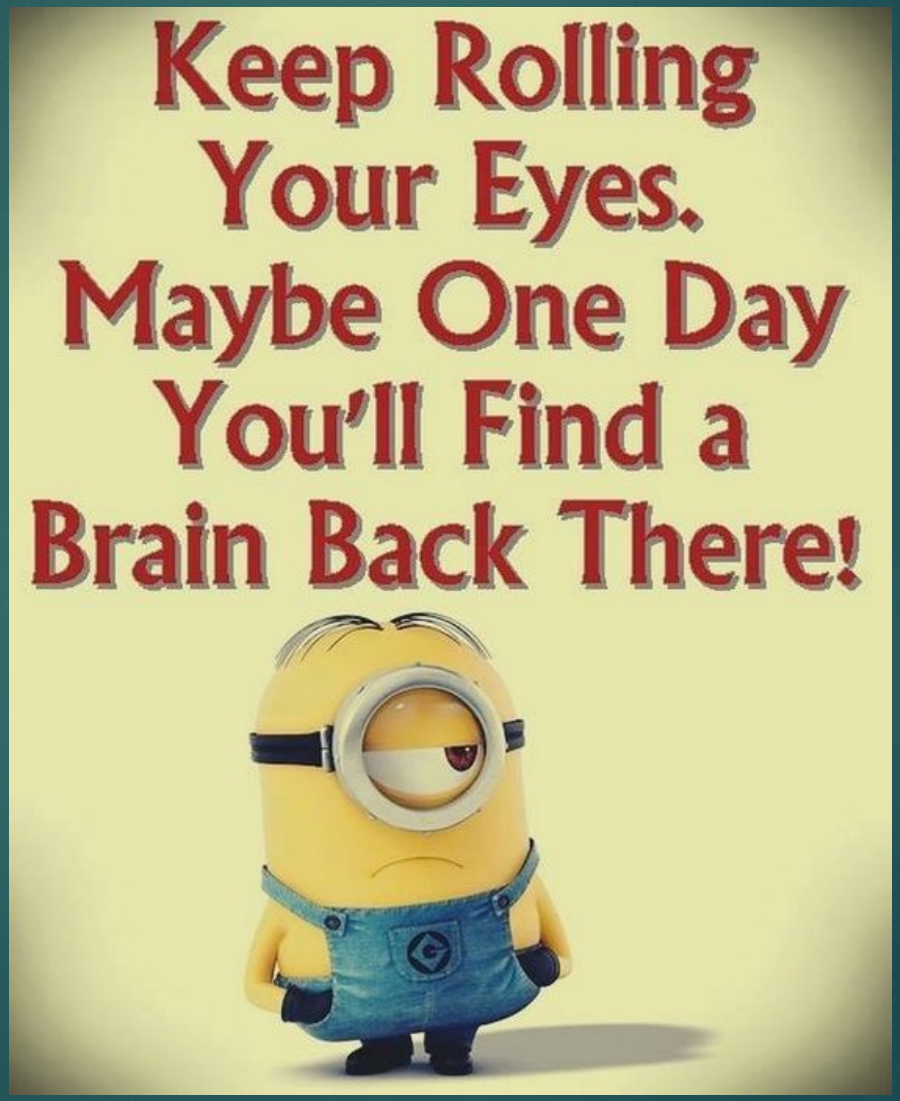
When they return

- Pull them away from their friends
- Without emotion go over what happened.
- Plan together how they can keep from being asked to leave again.

Give teens leadership roles!

- Formal
  - Official volunteer program
  - Program planning
  - Teen Advisory Board
  - Shadowing opportunities
- Informal
  - Help set up and breakdown for programs
  - Straighten room, rearrange the furniture, or decorate department
  - Shutdown computers before closing
  - Cut out crafts for storytime

Sense of HUMOR!!



Sources

- The Future of Library Services for and with Teens: A Call to Action – YALSA www.ala.org/yaforum/project-report
- Fesko, Shari. "Get with the Program - Taming of the Teens." *VOYA* 37.1 (2014): 46. Web.
- *The Teenage Brain* by Frances E. Jensen MD